

Green Schools Mercury Audit – Draft March 1, 2003

Mercury is found in very small amounts naturally in the environment; however, it is a substance that can have some very harmful effects on environment if it is spilled or improperly disposed of. Replacing mercury-containing items such as thermometers, barometers, and thermostats with mercury-free alternatives can prevent mercury spills from occurring and minimize the risk to the environment. This audit will help you to identify mercury-containing items in your school and become familiar with your school's mercury disposal and storage practices. Once you know where mercury is located in your school and your school's mercury handling and disposal practices, you can start thinking about ways to reduce the risk of a mercury spill in your school.

Science Classrooms (Chemistry, Physics, and Biology)

1. Are there any mercury/mercury containing items in the classroom, if so how many?

<input type="checkbox"/> Elemental Mercury	<u>Number or Amount</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mercury Compounds	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Mercury Thermometers	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Mercury Barometers	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Thermostats	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	_____

2. Are mercury/mercury compounds currently used in the science classes, if so, which items?

3. If they are being used, could other substances replace them?

4. Where are the mercury/mercury containing items being stored?

<input type="checkbox"/> Closet/Cabinets
<input type="checkbox"/> Locked Closets/Cabinets
<input type="checkbox"/> Non breakable Containers
<input type="checkbox"/> Storage Rooms
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

5. Are all mercury containing items double wrapped prior to being stored?

6. Has there ever been a spill of mercury in your school (i.e. broken thermometer)?

7. Has your school ever had a reported mercury spill? If yes, what happened as a result of the spill?

8. Does your school have a mercury spill kit?

9. Are school staff members and students familiar with the proper spill control procedures for mercury? If yes, who?

Nurse's Office

1. Are there any mercury/mercury containing items in the nurse's office, if so how many?

	<u>Number or amount</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Mercury Thermometers	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Blood Pressure Measuring Devices (Sphygmomanometer)	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Nasal Spray	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Contact Lens Solution	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Thermostats	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	_____

2. Has a mercury thermometer ever broken in the nurse's office?
3. Is a spill kit readily available in the nurse's office?
4. Is the nurse familiar with the proper spill control procedures for mercury?
5. Has the nurse's office ever considered replacing mercury-containing items such as sphygmomanometers, nasal sprays, contact lens solutions or thermometers with mercury-free alternatives?

Electrical and Heating Equipment

1. Are there any mercury/mercury containing items in the schools electrical and heating equipment?

<input type="checkbox"/> Thermostats
<input type="checkbox"/> Silent Light Switches
<input type="checkbox"/> Fluorescent Bulbs
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

2. How many mercury containing thermostats and silent light switches are in your school building?
3. What procedure does your school follow for disposing of fluorescent bulbs?
4. If recycled, what does your recycler do with these bulbs?

Other

1. Does your sewerage district or solid waste office have a mercury collection program to encourage the replacement and proper handling of mercury containing items?
2. Does your school include the study of mercury as part of the curriculum? If so, in what subject is it included and at which grade levels?
3. Can you purchase new mercury containing fever thermometers at a local store?
4. Has your community organized a mercury thermometer take/buy back program?
5. Does your community have any regulations concerning mercury?

For further information on mercury visit the [Mercury in schools](#) Web site.